

# The Bible and Its Authority

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## 1. What the Bible Says About Its Own Authority

- 2 Timothy 3:16-17
- 2 Peter 1:19-21
- 2 Peter 3:15-16
- Other passages:

## 2. How We Got the Bible

What are the three theories of Biblical inspiration (i.e. how God inspired men to write Scripture)?

\_\_\_\_\_ inspiration: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ inspiration: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ inspiration: \_\_\_\_\_

List a few of the materials and objects that the ancient Biblical writers used:

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\_\_\_\_\_

Notes about manuscript copies: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

What were the four tests of canonicity (i.e. how the church confirmed which books should be in the Bible)?

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\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

When and where did the Church officially confirm the canon? \_\_\_\_\_

What is "textual criticism"? \_\_\_\_\_

### 3. The Other Attributes of Scripture

- Authority \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_

### 4. The Extent of Biblical Authority

Verbal Inspiration: \_\_\_\_\_

Plenary Inspiration: \_\_\_\_\_

Infallible: \_\_\_\_\_

Inerrant: \_\_\_\_\_

### 5. In the Words of History

- **Reformed** – 1561 Belgic Confession, Article 3-7  
([www.crcna.org/pages/belgic\\_confess\\_main.cfm](http://www.crcna.org/pages/belgic_confess_main.cfm))
- **Presbyterian** – 1643 Westminster Confession, chapter 1  
([www.reformed.org/documents/wcf\\_with\\_proofs/](http://www.reformed.org/documents/wcf_with_proofs/))
- **Anglican** – 1571 Thirty-Nine Articles, Article 6-7  
([anglicansonline.org/basics/thirty-nine\\_articles.html](http://anglicansonline.org/basics/thirty-nine_articles.html))
- **Historic Baptist** – 1689 London Baptist Confession of Faith  
([www.vor.org/truth/1689/1689bc00.html](http://www.vor.org/truth/1689/1689bc00.html))
- **Southern Baptist** – 2000 Baptist Faith and Message  
(<http://www.sbc.net/bfm/>)
- **International Council on Biblical Inerrancy** – 1978 Chicago Statement on Inerrancy  
([http://www.baptiststart.com/print/chicago\\_statement.html](http://www.baptiststart.com/print/chicago_statement.html))

# Ten Evidences That the Bible Is True

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**Randal K. Young**

## **1. The Bible Claims It's True**

Although this in itself does not prove that the Bible true, we could immediately doubt the truth of the Bible if it never made this claim. The fact is that the Bible claims that it is written by God and thus keeps open the possibility that it is true:

*All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness. (2 Tim. 3:16)*

*Above all, you must understand that no prophecy of Scripture came about by the prophet's own interpretation. For prophecy never had its origin in the will of man, but men spoke from God as they were carried along by the Holy Spirit. (2 Peter 1:20-21)*

## **2. Jesus Claims It's True**

Even if you think Jesus is just a great teacher, that fact that a great teacher makes such a claim about the Bible must count as evidence for the Bible's truth. Jesus claimed that "Scripture cannot be broken" (John 10:35), "until heaven and earth disappear, not the smallest letter, not the least stroke of a pen, will by any means disappear from the Law until everything is accomplished" (Matthew 5:18), and "O foolish men, and slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have spoken..." (Luke 24:25-27). Jesus also used the Bible as a weapon against Satan in Matthew chap. 4. And He kept appealing to the Bible, knowing it had authority, by saying "it is written" seventy times.

## **3. The Bible Is Morally and Ethically Superior to Other Literature**

My college English professor (a non-Christian) at the University of California, Berkeley, encouraged us to read the book of Ecclesiastes, claiming that it was a remarkable piece of literature. The Bible's superiority has often been acknowledged even by unbelievers and is denied by few who have actually read and studied its pages.

## **4. The Bible Has the Power to Affect Us**

When some people read the Bible, they claim to "meet God." In the 1500's, one man, Martin Luther, the great father of Protestant churches said, "My conscience has been taken captive by the Word of God." I too have been "taken captive" by the Bible. I didn't fully believe that the Bible was true until one evening, when I was 19, I started reading the Bible, beginning in the books of John and Matthew. Beginning with the first evening, the Bible so captivated me that I couldn't put it down. I started to read it ten minutes a day, then 15, then 20, then 30 minutes a day. I was so moved by what I read that I committed my life to Jesus Christ.

## **5. The Bible Has Extraordinary Unity**

The Bible is composed of 66 parts, or books, written over a period of approximately 1,500 years (from about 1450 BC to about 90 AD) by over 40 different people. These writers were all different from each other. Some were rich, some poor, some young, some old. Some were priests, some prophets, one was a tax collector (Matthew), one was a doctor (Luke), a tentmaker (Paul), and a fisherman (Peter). Yet they all wrote about the same man who claimed to be God - Jesus Christ. On the surface, there might seem to be disagreement between the writers, but if you study deeper, you will find that they all agree about Jesus Christ, God, the Holy Spirit, the Bible, the end times, salvation, heaven, hell, etc.

Other religious “scriptures” cannot claim this feature. The Koran was entirely written through the revelations of one man, Mohammed. The Book of Mormon was entirely written through one man, Joseph Smith.

## **6. The Bible Is Historically Accurate**

Luke, a Bible writer, is one example. His details about Roman officials such as “Sergio Paulus of Cyprus,” “Gallio, the proconsul of Achaia,” “Herod the Great,” “Pontius Pilate,” and “King Agrippa,” are all confirmed by ancient Roman historical records and archeology. Even unbelieving scholars agree that King David, King Solomon, the Philistines, and countless other persons mentioned in the Bible were real people, and that such cities as Ephesus, Philippi, and Thessalonica were real places. The ancient **Ebla Tablets**, a collection of 17,000 tablets discovered since 1968 and written around 2,500 B.C. mention the biblical cities of Sodom, Gomorrah, Admah, Zeboiim, and Zoar, found in Genesis 14. The **Mari Tablets**, 25,000 tablets written in 1,900 B.C., mention the names of Abraham, Jacob, Nahor, Dan, Levi, Benjamin, and Ishmael, found in the book of Genesis. Also a Canaanite bronze calf was discovered a couple of years ago and reported in Time magazine, confirming the Bible’s account that pagan nations worshiped calves.

## **7. Bible Prophecies Are Fulfilled**

Jesus Christ, for example, fulfilled numerous prophecies. Read Isaiah 53 (the entire chapter), Micah 5:2, Daniel 9:25-27, and Jeremiah 23:5-6, and Psalm 16:8-11. In these few Old Testament prophecies, made several hundred years before Christ, we are told the exact time of Jesus’ coming, the exact place of His birth, the family of which He would be born, the condition of His family at the time of His birth, how He would be received by people, the method and details of His death, how He would be buried, and His resurrection. These predictions were all fulfilled with great precision in Jesus Christ.

## **8. Bible Has Been Extraordinarily Preserved**

The Bible is very old. Its oldest book is almost 3,500 years old. Yet, somehow, more than any other ancient writing, the Bible doesn’t seem to change over time, even over thousands of years. For example, ancient scrolls of parts of the Bible (e.g. book of Isaiah, Psalms) written around 100 B.C. were found in the 1940’s near the Dead Sea in the Middle East. When compared to the next most ancient biblical scrolls, the Masoretic Texts, written around 900 A.D., there are virtually no significant differences!

As for the New Testament, there are about 25,000 ancient manuscripts (i.e. copies), dating as early as 120 A.D., or in other words, just 30 years after the last book of the

New Testament was written. Compare this to Homer's Iliad, of classical Greek literature (which you might have studied in junior high), of which there are only 643 ancient manuscripts, dating only as early as 500 years after its writing. There are only 193 manuscripts of the works of Sophocles, 49 of Aristotle, and only 7 of Plato's Tetralogies, dating as much as early as 1,200 years after its writing. In short, the Bible is perhaps the most well-preserved book in the world.

## 9. The Bible Writers Endured Great Persecution for What They Saw

They were eyewitnesses to Jesus' resurrection or His existence and held to their story even under great persecution. If the events in the Bible were false, no writer in his right mind would endure such torture for a lie. Matthew was slain with a sword in Ethiopia. Mark died by being dragged through the streets of Alexandria. Luke was hanged on an olive tree. John was banished to prison in Patmos. Peter was crucified upside down. Jude was shot to death with arrows. Paul was beheaded at Rome by Emperor Nero.

## 10. The Bible Changes Lives

Prostitutes have been reformed. Drunkards have become sober. The prideful become humble. The weak become strong, when they read the Bible. And in my own church, there are hundreds of testimonies of drug addicts who came clean, violent men who became gentle, alcoholics who became sober, atheists who became believers, troubled marriages that became happy ones, because they read the Bible and what it said about Jesus Christ.



Black Obelisk of Shalmaneser III  
mentions Jehu, King of Israel



Mesha Stele, 9<sup>th</sup> cent BC,  
mentions Omri, King of Israel



1<sup>st</sup> cent inscription says,  
"This building –  
Tiberium, by Pontius  
Pilatus, prefect of  
Judea, has been built."

# Introduction to Biblical Inerrancy

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Just as a clock is a standard for time, a ruler a standard for a contractor, and a tape measure a standard for a seamstress, so Christ's Church needs a standard for all who interpret the Bible. This Chicago Statement on Biblical Inerrancy is one such standard. It was composed in 1978 by evangelical leaders all over the world, including J. I. Packer, James M. Boice, R. C. Sproul, D. James Kennedy, John MacArthur, Josh MacDowell, Luis Palau, and Bill Bright. But it is nothing new. The historic Church has always believed in the infallibility and inerrancy of Scripture. The word "inerrancy" restores and communicates the meaning of Biblical infallibility in an age where the truthfulness of the Bible is constantly under attack by the "experts" of the world. Without a firm stand on the Bible, the Church, over time, will experience "truth decay."

Attached at the end are excerpts and quotes that demonstrate how one denomination slid far down the slippery slope into great error 80 years after denying Biblical inerrancy. Note: As with all denominations, the direction of this one denomination does not mean that ALL of its members churches agree with its decisions.

## Chicago Statement On Inerrancy (1978)

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### ***A SHORT STATEMENT***

1. God, who is Himself Truth and speaks truth only, has inspired Holy Scripture in order thereby to reveal Himself to lost mankind through Jesus Christ as Creator and Lord, Redeemer and Judge. Holy Scripture is God's witness to Himself.
2. Holy Scripture, being God's own Word, written by men prepared and superintended by His Spirit, is of infallible divine authority in all matters upon which it touches: it is to be believed, as God's instruction, in all that it affirms; obeyed, as God's command, in all that it requires; embraced, as God's pledge, in all that it promises.
3. The Holy Spirit, Scripture's divine Author, both authenticates it to us by His inward witness and opens our minds to understand its meaning.
4. Being wholly and verbally God-given, Scripture is without error or fault in all its teaching, no less in what it states about God's acts in creation, about the events of world history, and about its own literary origins under God, than in its witness to God's saving grace in individual lives.
5. The authority of Scripture is inescapably impaired if this total divine inerrancy is in any way limited or disregarded, or made relative to a view of truth contrary to the Bible's own; and such lapses bring serious loss to both the individual and the Church.

## ***ARTICLES OF AFFIRMATION AND DENIAL***

### ***ARTICLE I***

**We affirm** that the Holy Scriptures are to be received as the authoritative Word of God.

**We deny** that the Scriptures receive their authority from the Church, tradition, or any other human source.

### ***ARTICLE II***

**We affirm** that the Scriptures are the supreme written norm by which God binds the conscience, and that the authority of the Church is subordinate to that of Scripture.

**We deny** that Church creeds, councils, or declarations have authority greater than equal to the authority of the Bible.

### ***ARTICLE III***

**We affirm** that the written Word in its entirety is revelation given by God.

**We deny** that the Bible is merely a witness to revelation, or only becomes revelation encounter, or depends on the responses of men for its validity.

### ***ARTICLE IV***

**We affirm** that God who made mankind in His image has used language as a means revelation.

**We deny** that human language is so limited by our creatureliness that it is rendered inadequate as a vehicle for divine revelation. We further deny that the corruption of human culture and language through sin has thwarted God's work of inspiration.

### ***ARTICLE V***

**We affirm** that God's revelation in the Holy Scriptures was progressive.

**We deny** that later revelation, which may fulfill, earlier revelation, ever corrects or contradicts it. We further deny that any normative revelation has been given since the completion of the New Testament writings.

### ***ARTICLE VI***

**We affirm** that the whole of Scripture and all its parts, down to the very words of original, were given by divine inspiration.

**We deny** that the inspiration of Scripture can rightly be affirmed of the whole without the parts, or of some parts but not the whole.

### ***ARTICLE VII***

**We affirm** that inspiration was the work in which God by His Spirit, through human writers, gave us His Word. The origin of Scripture is divine. The mode of divine inspiration remains largely a mystery to us.

**We deny** that inspiration can be reduced to human insight, or to heightened states of consciousness of any kind.

### ***ARTICLE VIII***

**We affirm** that God in His Work of inspiration utilized the distinctive personalities and literary styles of the writers whom He had chosen and prepared.

**We deny** that God, in causing these writers to use the very words that He chose, overrode their personalities.

#### *ARTICLE IX*

**We affirm** that inspiration, though not conferring omniscience, guaranteed true and trustworthy utterance on all matters of which the Bible authors were moved to speak and write.

**We deny** that the finitude or fallenness of these writers, by necessity or otherwise, introduced distortion or falsehood into God's Word.

#### *ARTICLE X*

**We affirm** that inspiration, strictly speaking, applies to the autographic text of Scripture, which in the providence of God can be ascertained from available manuscripts with great accuracy. We further affirm that copies and translations of Scripture are the Word of God to extent that they faithfully represent the original.

**We deny** that any essential element of the Christian faith is affected by the absence of the autographs. We further deny that this absence renders the assertion of Biblical inerrancy invalid or irrelevant.

#### *ARTICLE XI*

**We affirm** that Scripture, having been given by divine inspiration, is infallible, so that, far from misleading us, it is true and reliable in all matters it addresses.

**We deny** that it is possible for the Bible to be at the same time infallible and errant in its assertions. Infallibility and inerrancy may be distinguished, but not separated.

#### *ARTICLE XII*

**We affirm** that Scripture in its entirety is inerrant, being free from all falsehood, fraud, or deceit.

**We deny** that Biblical infallibility and inerrancy are limited to spiritual, religious or redemptive themes, exclusive of assertions in the fields of history and science. We further deny that scientific hypotheses about earth history may properly be used to overturn the teaching of Scripture on creation and the flood.

#### *ARTICLE XIII*

**We affirm** the propriety of using inerrancy as theological term with reference to the complete truthfulness of Scripture.

**We deny** that it is proper to evaluate Scripture according to standards of truth and error that are alien to its usage or purpose. We further deny that inerrancy is negated by Biblical phenomena such as a lack of modern technical precision, irregularities of grammar or spelling, observational descriptions of nature, the reporting of falsehoods, the use of hyperbole and round numbers, the topical arrangement of material, variant selections of material in parallel accounts, or the use of free citations.

#### *ARTICLE XIV*

**We affirm** the unity and internal consistency of Scripture.

**We deny** that alleged errors and discrepancies that have not yet been resolved vitiate the truth of claims of the Bible.



#### *ARTICLE XV*

**We affirm** that the doctrine of inerrancy is grounded in the teaching of the Bible about inspiration.

**We deny** that Jesus' teaching about Scripture may be dismissed by appeals to accommodation or to any natural limitation of His humanity.

#### *ARTICLE XVI*

**We affirm** that the doctrine of inerrancy has been integral to the Church's faith throughout its history.

**We deny** that inerrancy is a doctrine invented by Scholastic Protestantism, is a reactionary position postulated in response to negative higher criticism.

#### *ARTICLE XVII*

**We affirm** that the Holy Spirit bears witness to the Scriptures, assuring believers of the truthfulness of God's written Word.

**We deny** that this witness of the Holy Spirit operates in isolation from or against Scripture.

#### *ARTICLE XVIII*

**We affirm** that the text of Scripture is to be interpreted by grammatico-historical exegesis, taking account of its literary forms and devices, and that Scripture is to interpret Scripture.

**We deny** the legitimacy of any treatment of the text or quest for sources lying behind it that leads to relativizing, dehistoricizing, or discounting its teaching, or rejecting its claims to authorship.

#### *ARTICLE XIX*

**We affirm** that a confession of the full authority, infallibility, and inerrancy of Scripture is vital to a sound understanding of the whole of the Christian faith. We further affirm that such confession should lead to increasing conformity to the image of Christ.

**We deny** that such confession is necessary for salvation. However, we further deny that inerrancy can be rejected without grave consequences, both to the individual and to the Church.

## Statements in Support of Biblical Inerrancy

**Augustine** on Scripture, 405: "I most firmly believe that the authors were completely free from error." (*Letter to Jerome*, Chap. 1, sec. 3)

**Martin Luther**: "...[the fathers] have erred as men will; therefore I am ready to trust them only when they prove their opinions from Scripture, which has never erred." (*Weimarer Ausgabe*, 7, 315)

**John Calvin, 1555**: "Indeed God's Spirit, who appointed the Evangelists as recorders, deliberately controlled their pen, so that all should write in complete agreement, but in different ways." (*Harmony of the Gospels*, vol. 1, trans. by A. W. Morrison, Grand Rapids: Eerdmans Publishing, 1972, p. 82)

## Statements Against Biblical Inerrancy

### Auburn Affirmation

Signed by 150 ministers of the Presbyterian Church USA (PCUSA), against Biblical inerrancy, on December 26, 1923: "There is no assertion in the Scriptures that their writers were kept 'from error.'"

### The Aftermath, 2004

"Parker is president of Starr King, a Unitarian seminary, and a professor of theology. Both have been invited speakers and consultants at Presbyterian Church (USA) events... Parker recalled that the 1993 gathering dropped a theological bomb when feminist theologian Delores Williams declared, 'We don't need folks hanging on crosses and blood dripping and weird stuff.' But Parker claimed atonement theology -- focusing on the death of Christ on the cross -- was out of skew with Christian history." (Adams, John H., "Re-Imaginers: Christians Wrong to Believe Jesus Died for Their Sins," *The Layman*, October 2004, p. 18) [Full article below]

# Re-Imaginers: Christians wrong to believe Jesus died for their sins

By John H. Adams, *The Layman Online*, June 23, 2003

MINNEAPOLIS – Two feminist theologians, considered leading lights in the Re-Imagining movement, told their fellow travelers that Christians have been wrong for centuries to believe that Jesus died to atone for their sins.

Rather, Rita Nakashima Brock and Rebecca Parker told about 200 women gathered for the 10th anniversary and final Re-Imagining Gathering that the so-called atonement theology was concocted by 10th-century Christians to justify violence, including the Crusades and the Inquisition.



1 Rita Brock

Even today, they said, President George W. Bush, as a conservative Christian, has the “warrior” instinct that stems from a fundamentalist view that Christians are soldiers. Other speakers were less reserved. One called Bush a “fascist.”

The Re-Imagining Gathering on the campus of the University of Minnesota June 19-21 had a number of political overtones, particularly against Bush and other conservatives. Some of its participants promoted abortion at every level, including the late-term procedure that destroys a baby’s life in the process of delivery. Some called on government to sanction “marriages” for same-sex couples.

Brock and Parker spoke after conference participants welcomed them to the stage by raising arms in the manner of a “wave,” similar to a fan demonstration at athletic events. “Let Sophia be your wisdom,” they chanted. “Share her wisdom.”

While some of the participants claim that they do not worship a goddess named Sophia – after the Greek word for wisdom – their rituals unquestionably leave that impression. The wave and chant were standard greetings for speakers at the conference.

Brock is a research associate at the Starr King School for the Ministry of the Graduate Theological Union in Berkeley, Calif. Parker is president of the seminary and a professor of theology. Both unmarried, they work together and travel together. Both have been invited speakers and consultants at Presbyterian Church (USA) events.



They are the co-authors of *Proverbs of Ashes: Violence, Redemptive Suffering, and the Search for What Saves Us* – which suggests that women are redeemed by their own suffering, whether natural (child birth) or as a result of oppression by men. Jesus, sometimes called “Jesus-Sophia” by the re-imaginers, becomes a model, but not a savior.

They seem to relish being on the cutting edge of controversy over the atonement, a fundamental doctrine of the Christian faith. “Once the ‘Evil Empire’ fell,” said Brock, “the religious right identified us as the new Evil Empire and came after us with a vengeance.”

“We know we are right, and we are in it for the long haul, and for our lives’ sake,” she said. “Though the world has changed, we were right at the first Re-Imagining. We were right about

2 Rebecca Parker

Sophia. We were right to celebrate her. She has been and will continue to be a major figure in Christianity.”

Parker recalled that the 1993 gathering dropped a theological bomb when feminist theologian Delores Williams declared, “We don’t need folks hanging on crosses and blood dripping and weird stuff.”

But Parker claimed atonement theology – focusing on the death of Christ on the cross – was out of skew with Christian history. Before the 10th century, Christians depicted Christ alive on the cross, she said. The death of Christ did not become a central doctrine of Christianity until the 10th century, she said, and “the emergence of a dead Christ marked a shift in Christianity toward violence.”

Further, she said, the Crusaders used the cross to justify killing “approximately 10,000 Jews in the Rhineland, nearly a third of the Jewish population in Europe. With this first crusade, war became a way of Christian life – holy war with the invention of genocide.”

Parker argued that male theologians, offering their “first full-blown explanation of a substitutionary atonement,” concluded that the execution of Jesus was “a gift that liberates humanity.” Hence, “Man cannot give himself more fully to God than when he commits himself to death.”

That, she said, made “the resurrection and the life of Jesus unnecessary ... With this theology, Western theology turned to violence. The fastest route to paradise was to kill or be killed for Christ. Self-sacrifice became the highest love. Death by torture became salvation.”

Brock, who called herself a “happy heretic” when she agreed to be photographed by The Layman Online, said the atonement theology was the church’s error – even though sacrifice for sin runs from Genesis to Revelation, hardly a 10th-century discovery. But she believes “The church confused the mystical body of Christ with the literal body” of the Jesus who died on the cross.

In the substitutionary theory of atonement, she said, “the Crusaders substitute Jews for the Romans, Jesus substitutes for God, God substitutes for Satan” and Christians “substitute violence for the moral virtues of restraint and serenity.”

He brought her analogy into the present: “Afghanistan can substitute for Al Quaida; Saddam Hussein can substitute for Osama Bin Laden; all Arab men can substitute for terrorists ... The emergence of this theology marks the beginning of a 1,000-year period in history dominated by violence and self-sacrifice, images of war, terror and abuse.”

And she declared, “We have a right to reject any theology that makes violence a way to save the world.”

Before the church adopted atonement theology, Brock said, it focused on baptism as the beginning “of the journey toward becoming divine,” not as a cleansing from sin, and the eucharist as a celebration of joy, not as a remembrance of the death of Christ.

After baptism, she said, confirmands fasted before their first eucharist, and “to break that fast, they were first given a cup of milk sweetened by honey.” With that teaching, the re-imaginings have justified their own use of milk and honey as a sacrament. They do not use the traditional elements of juice or wine and bread to symbolize the blood and broken body of Jesus.

Parker described baptism as a “process called *theosis*, or becoming divine – a process of becoming divine by incarnating Sophia.”

Saying she was abused as a child, Parker told of retreating to a Hindu community and living for a while in silence. She described one of her paintings in which she portrayed her body as having been penetrated “by an old gray penis.” With her paints, she said she surgically removed it, sutured up that area of her body and concluded, “Surely, goodness and mercy will follow me all the days of my life.”

For Brock, paradise is not some far-off resting place, but an earthly location “found in this life. Paradise was the living of a sanctified life in the world” where the “divine spirit is incarnate in all of the world.”

“The idea that the body and blood signify the sacrifice is very late,” she added. “The body and blood represent not the death of Jesus, but the resurrected life.”

“We have a warrior culture,” said Parker. “We think the dominant culture is a culture of violence. We have to see ourselves as caretakers for the well-being of our whole nation and our globe.”

But what about the violence against the early Christians by Rome? Brock was asked.

“The persecution we hear about the early Christian church wasn’t all that common,” she said. And she spoke disparagingly of the way Christians responded to the persecutions in what she called the development “of the cult of the martyr.”

She added, “When these unusual deaths happened, they called that a certain kind of energy. People would take souvenirs, pieces of bone or clothing. There was a coalescing of power. The same thing happened with the lynchings” in the United States. “The relics of the martyrs who stood firm for their faith were especially powerful amulets, if you will.”